

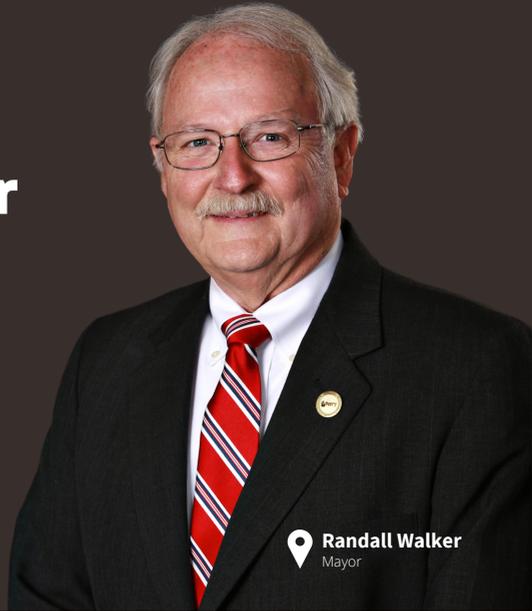
Start a new *Business Guide*

A guide to *opening* your
new business smoothly
in Perry.



Where Georgia comes together.

Where *Georgia* Comes Together



An *award-winning* community...



 **Randall Walker**
Mayor

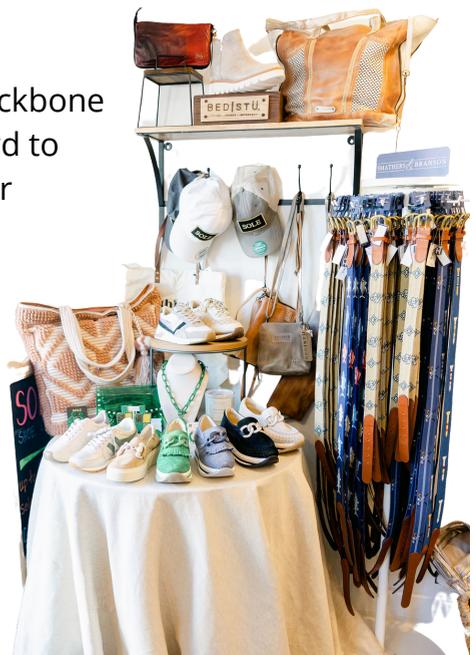
Thank you for choosing Perry as your place to do business!

We are here to serve you. The Perry Council and I pride ourselves on transparency and accessibility.

We created this Start a New Business Guide to walk you through the basics of doing business in Perry. Our staff is also happy to answer any questions you have.

We also encourage you to visit our website at perry-ga.gov. There you will find a wealth of information about our policies and procedures.

Businesses, such as yours, are the backbone of our local economy. We look forward to working with you and supporting your business!



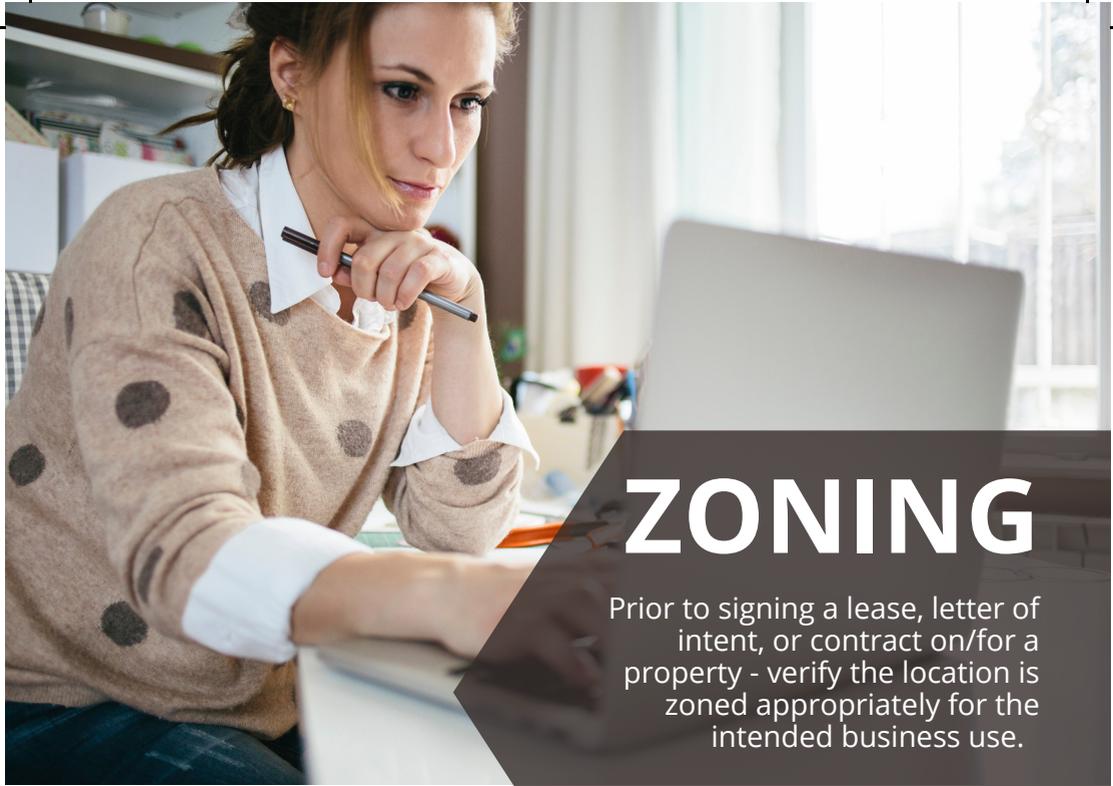


LET'S START AT THE *beginning.*

The City of Perry wants to ensure your business is successful from the first day of operation and for many years to come. This guide serves as a how-to roadmap to open a new business whether it's new construction, renovation of an existing structure, or leasing the perfect space.

INITIAL BUSINESS STARTUP CHECKLIST

- Set up corporate structure (LLC, S-Corp) through your attorney or CPA.
- Create a business plan and/or marketing plan.
- Plan your financing (have your finances in order)
- Identify your location and determine if it is zoned appropriately.
- Sign lease/purchase property.
- Obtain necessary permits before building construction/renovation or change of use.
- Obtain your sign permit.
- Obtain a building inspection for a Certificate of Occupancy.
- Obtain City business license (also called an Occupational Tax Certificate)



ZONING

Prior to signing a lease, letter of intent, or contract on/for a property - verify the location is zoned appropriately for the intended business use.

A complete list of uses allowed in each zone is available in our Land Management Ordinance at perry-ga.gov/LMO in Article 4.

Nonresidential Zoning Districts and Examples:

- OI - Office and Institutional - small professional office, photography studio
- LC - Limited Commercial - beauty salon, medical office
- C-1 - Highway Commercial - travel center, hotel, large retail
- C-2 - General Commercial - grocery store, restaurant, convenience store
- C-3 - Central Business - small retail, spa, brewpub
- M-1 - Wholesale and Light Industrial - self-storage, auto sales and service
- M-2 - General Industrial - manufacturing, warehouse and distribution

Form-Based Code:

- NMU - Neighborhood Mixed Use - professional services, small retail
- MUC - Mixed Use Center - grocery store, restaurant, convenience store
- IMU - Interstate Mixed Use - travel center, hotel, large retail

Rezoning

If a rezoning request for an intended use is needed, you must complete an application for the Planning Commission's consideration.

Rezoning applications are available at perry-ga.gov/plandocs.

The City's Community Development staff can assist you in determining if the location and type of business is in compliance with the zoning ordinance. Contact them at (478) 988-2720 or comm.development@perry-ga.gov.

Building Permits: New Construction & Renovation

Architectural plans are required to obtain a building permit for any new structure, addition, accessory building, substantial improvement, or alteration for a commercial use within the City of Perry.

Requires a building a permit (not limited to):

- New construction
- Additions or modifications
- Change of use
- Structural repairs or remodeling
- Water heaters, gas, sewer, water, & electrical systems
- Heating appliance
- Central air conditioning
- Plumbing and gas
- Electrical wiring

Pre-application Meeting

A pre-application meeting is required with the business owner/architect, engineer, general contractor, etc.

Plans, at a minimum, shall include electrical, plumbing, HVAC, gas riser diagrams, and ADA details.

What is required?

A fire and life safety plan laid out on a floor plan drawing to include exit and emergency lighting, egress/exit requirements, travel distances, fire ratings, and fire protection systems.

For any alterations or construction - a floor plan, wall section, structural details, elevations with exterior materials and colors, identified hardware, and window and door schedules.

Footing and foundation plan to include rebar size, locations, and depth and width of footings and slabs.

Energy code information (Com-Check) should include insulation details for walls, ceilings, and lighting compliance.

Electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and gas plans need to provide detailed information of fixture type, location, and sizing.

The typical plan review timeframe for renovations and new construction is approximately four weeks.

The State of Georgia requires all contractors to be licensed to perform contracted work. Contact Community Development at (478) 988-2720 and the Fire Marshal's Office at (478) 988-2759 for additional information regarding specific occupancy requirements and building permits.

Begin the building permit process by visiting perry-ga.gov/community-development.

Inspections

Inspections at the business location must be performed by the Community Development Office and the Fire Marshal's Office before being issued a certificate of occupancy or business license (Occupational Tax Certificate).

Both offices work together to verify commercial locations are safe for occupancy by the business and the public. They ensure permitted projects are constructed by adhering to the submitted building plans and are constructed in accordance with all building and life safety codes adopted by the State of Georgia and the City of Perry.

Typical Inspections (not limited to):

- Sub-slab
- Footing/slab
- Rough-in framing (plumbing, electrical, gas, and mechanical)
- Above ceiling/80%
- Commercial cooking hood, duct inspection
- Fire sprinkler or suppression system pressure test, underground, and above ground
- Insulation
- Building water, sewer, and stormwater
- Permanent electrical service
- Final acceptance of fire sprinkler system, commercial cooking hood system, and 100% and issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or business license

Fire Marshal's Office Focus

- Occupancy classification & requirements
- Egress/exits to include lighting, signage, and size
- Features of fire protection, fire walls, smoke barriers, construction
- Fire protection systems, sprinklers, alarms, extinguishers, etc.
- ADA/accessibility requirements and compliance
- Storage, hazardous/non-hazardous
- Water supplies and fire flows
- Fire protection calculations

Community Development Focus

- Site layout, footings, & slab
- Framing and structure
- Plumbing, electric, gas, & HVAC
- Underground utilities
- Access, ingress, egress, & ADA
- Temporary and permanent electric
- Landscape/hardscape
- Parking areas

After successful inspections, a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued. No building shall be occupied without a Certificate of Occupancy.

Contact Community Development at (478) 988-2720 and the Fire Marshal's Office at (478) 988-2759 for additional information about inspections and permits.

Occupational Tax Certificate

An Occupational Tax Certificate, also known as a business license, is required to conduct business within the City of Perry. Most businesses will need to complete an application for a general business license.

Applicants Must Also Complete:

- Notarized affidavits (Affidavit Verifying Status & Private Employer)
- Home-Based Business acknowledgment form (if applicable)
- Copies of appropriate identification
- License fees are based on the number of employees
- Fee Schedule is located online at perry-ga.gov/customerservice

Payments can be made by cash, check, or debit/credit card.
Applications & affidavits are located online at perry-ga.gov/licenses.

Home Occupation

Home-based businesses may be approved by the Community Development if all of the following conditions are met:

- No customers or clients at home
- No more than 25% of the home may be used for business
- No changes or alteration made to the house to facilitate business
- No outside storage or display
- No outside employees working in the home
- No business vehicle larger than a van or pickup truck at the home
- No more than two deliveries per week
- No business signs

If these conditions cannot be met, a home-based business may still be possible. It may, however, require City Council approval.

Food Service Business

Businesses involving the sale of food may require Houston County Health Department approval in addition to meeting City of Perry requirements. Contact the Health Department at (478) 218-2000 for more information.

Alcohol Sales

Businesses involving the sale of alcohol have certain restrictions (not limited to):

- Proper zoning
- Setbacks from schools, churches, etc. may apply
- State license may be required.

Utilities

The following services are provided by the City of Perry:

- Natural gas (in select areas)
- Fire protection
- Water
- Stormwater management
- Sewer collection and grease trap servicing
- Solid waste

Contact the Perry Customer Service Department at (478) 988-2754 to activate services.

Signs

A permit is required for most permanent signs within the City of Perry. Permit fees are based on a sliding scale.

Applicants must:

- Produce a colored rendering and dimensions of the proposed sign
- Identify sign type (freestanding, pole, monument, etc.)
- Site Plan must accompany all freestanding signs

Sign standards are based on the property zoning and any applicable overlay districts. Verify guidelines before submitting an application.

Sign permit applications are located online at perry-ga.gov/community-development on the Citizens Self Service Portal.

Additional Resources for Businesses

Middle Georgia SCORE

Free business mentoring services
middlegeorgia@scorevolunteer.org

UGA Small Business Center

(478) 757-3609

Perry Area Chamber

Networking, marketing, business support,
ribbon cuttings
(478) 987-1234
perrygachamber.com

Robins Regional Chamber

Networking, marketing, business support,
ribbon cuttings
(478) 922-8585
robinsregion.com

Central Georgia Technical College

Workforce assistance & training for employers
centralgatech.edu

Important Contact Numbers

Perry

Business License Office	(478) 988-2740
Community Development	(478) 988-2720
Customer Service	(478) 988-2754
Economic Development	(478) 988-2755
Fire Marshal's Office	(478) 988-2759
Police Department	(478) 988-2804
Houston County Health Department	(478) 218-2020
Georgia Power	1-(888)-660-5890
Flint EMC	(478) 988-3500
Windstream Communications	1-(800)-501-1776
ComSouth/Hargray Communications	(478) 987-0172

Locations

City of Perry City Hall

808 Carroll Street
(478) 988-2700
Council Chamber, Economic Development,
City Clerk, Welcome Center, Fire Marshal

City of Perry Administration Building

1211 Washington Street
(478) 988-2700
Administration, Customer Service,
Finance, Human Resources

City of Perry Planning, Engineering, and Building Services

741 Main Street
(478) 988-2720
Community Development, Engineering
Services, Code Compliance

City of Perry Police Department

1207 Washington Street
(478) 988-2800
Police services

City of Perry Fire & Emergency Services

1207 Washington Street
(478) 988-2850
Fire services





Businesses located in the Downtown Development District must comply with zoning and building permit requirements for new construction and renovation projects.

Any exterior modifications, including paint, within the district must submit a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to work beginning. The Historic Preservation Commission or Main Street Advisory Board will review and approve or deny the application.

The Certificate of Appropriateness application is located online at perry-ga.gov/plandocs.

Main Street Advisory Board

The Perry Main Street Advisory Board's mission is to promote a thriving downtown business district while preserving Perry's historic resources and character.

Contact the Main Street Manager at (478) 988-2730 for more information about the Main Street Program.

Downtown District Programs

- Local and state revolving loan funds
- Natural Gas Incentive Program
- Façade grants

The Downtown District Map is located online at perry-ga.gov/downtownmap.

STAY **in touch!**

The City of Perry is proud to offer a variety of ways you can stay in touch with us!

There are several ways to receive relevant and timely information from your local government.

How we communicate:



PERRY POINTS

Text message service to ask questions, submit work requests, send a message to staff, and sign up for text alert notifications.

BEST FOR

Those who like information sent directly to their mobile phone or frequently use text to communicate.



PERRY PREVIEW

Monthly newsletter sent to your email. Includes occasional e-blasts with information about a particular subject or event.

BEST FOR

Those who like to receive non-urgent information in their email once a month.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The City of Perry is on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Find the links in the QR code above.

BEST FOR

Those who use social media for news and to connect with others.



INSIDE PERRY PODCAST

Get an inside look at Perry, Georgia's local government. Episodes are short and cover topics you want to know about.

BEST FOR

Those interested in a casual conversation about Perry's latest happenings and topics.

Use Perry Points to sign for for text alerts and receive timely, relevant information!